

GOOD NEWS FOR PARENTS OF JUNIORS: TAMING THE COLLEGE APPLICATION MONSTER

2008-2009 marked the first year of electronic submission of transcripts and recommendations via *The Common Application*. A majority of the private/independent colleges that Northgate students apply to, plus a growing number of public universities outside of California, accept *The Common Application*. To date, we have submitted close to 500 electronic transcripts this year, as well as school and teacher recommendations. Just on transcripts alone, this has saved families more than \$300 in postage, and reduced high school printing costs, time spent at copy and fax machines, stuffing envelopes and last minute trips to the Post Office. The glitches were few, and the “missing document crises” dramatically reduced. All but a few teachers embraced the process, and students were able to keep track of who had submitted what documents and when through their Common Application accounts. And once a Senior submitted the first transcript request, it was not necessary to provide us with any paperwork for other Common Application institutions.

The University of California and California State University systems utilize a “self-reported transcript,” which the applicant provides as part of the on-line application. UC campuses rarely request official transcripts after a student applies, but CSU campuses often do. So until the CSU system invests in the software necessary to receive secure transmission of transcripts, our Registrar will continue to require transcript request forms and stamped, addressed envelopes. Understand that she is also serving a large population of graduates who need transcripts for transferring from one college to another, enrollment in vocational schools, and, increasingly, employment applications. The transcript request form can be obtained from the “download forms” page of the NHS Parent Club web site, and completing the form in advance will make it easier for Ms. Kirk to meet your son’s or daughter’s needs.

To provide Juniors with a preview of what is to come, and lead time to complete the NHS *Personal Data Form*, required if a student will need recommendations for college or scholarship applications, I am repeating several of my *College-Bound Blitz* presentations in May. All will be during Study Sessions. ***Getting Organized*** on May 15th will focus on applying to the UC and CSU systems, and ***Effective Applications*** on May 22nd will address the “Activities and Awards” page of the UC and private college applications. ***College Visits and Interviews*** on May 20th is recommended for any students who plan to visit colleges this summer, within or outside of the Bay Area. Finally, Lee Oller and Sara Schroeder will provide ***Essay Prep*** on May 27th, for rising Seniors who don’t want to wait until fall to get started on the college essay or UC Personal Statement. Encourage your son or daughter to sign-up for any and all presentations in the College & Career Center, or e-mail me your student’s name and choices.

Pat Brands, College Counselor